

REMARKS

With the entry of this Amendment, claims 1-10 and 12-24 will be pending in this patent application. Claims 8-10, drawn to a non-elected species, stand withdrawn from consideration under 37 CFR § 1.142(b).

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's recognition of allowable subject matter in claims 3 and 12. In this paper, Applicant has added new claims 17-24, which depend from claim 3 or claim 12. These claims recite the same subject matter recited in claims 4-7 and 13-16, respectively, but do not depend from either claim 1 or claim 2. Like claims 4-7 and 13-16, all of the new claims are readable on the elected species. Applicant trusts that the Examiner will find claims 17-24 to be allowable along with claims 3 and 12.

PRIOR ART REJECTION I

Claims 1, 2, 4-7 and 16 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 6575845 B2 (Galloway et al.) in view of US 1269745 (Robertson). Applicant traverses this rejection insofar as it might be deemed applicable to any of claims 1, 2, 4-7 and 16 as now presented.

Without acquiescing in the rejection, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 2. Claims 4-7 and 16 have been amended to remove their dependence from claim 3 or claim 12.

As now presented, claim 1 recites a hollow golf club head having a combination of features that are not disclosed, suggested or made obvious by Galloway et al. and/or Robertson. In particular, claim 1 now recites the face plate as forming almost the entirety of the face portion and recites the sole plate as forming almost the entirety of the sole portion. In addition, claim 1

now recites the resin component as comprising a crown plate forming the crown portion and a side plate forming the side portion, the resin component being provided with an opening for accommodating the face portion and the sole portion of the metal component and a flange formed along an edge of the opening and supporting an edge portion of the metal component.

The Galloway et al. multiple material club head has a major body made of metal and a minor body made of a lightweight material, which may be a resin. As shown, for example, in Fig. 9 of Galloway et al., the major body 50 forms almost all of what could be fairly characterized as a side portion of the club head. An opening in the major body is surrounded by ledge section 80. When assembled to the major body, the minor body 60 covers the opening in the major body 50, and a peripheral edge of the minor body is supported on the ledge section of the major body. In the club head construction disclosed by Galloway et al., very little of the resin component forms a side portion. The metal component of the Galloway et al. club head is provided with an opening, and an edge of the resin component is supported on the ledge section of the metal component surrounding the opening. The club head construction disclosed by Galloway is therefore the inverse of the club head construction defined in Applicant's claim 1, in which the side portion is formed by the resin component, an opening is provided in the resin component and an edge of the metal component is supported on a flange along an edge of the opening in the resin component.

The Examiner concedes that the Galloway et al. club head does not have a sole plate that increases in thickness as recited in Applicant's claim 1. As a remedy for this deficiency in the Galloway et al. disclosure vis-à-vis the requirements of claim 1, the Examiner proposes a modification of the Galloway et al. club head whereby it incorporates a sole plate that increases in thickness toward the rear of the club head.

There is no suggestion whatsoever in Galloway et al. for making the sole section 76 of a thickness that increases in the direction from the front to the rear of the club head. To the contrary, Galloway et al. discloses the use of weighting members 122, 123 attached to the major

body 50 to achieve desired properties such as center of gravity and moment of inertia of the club head. Robertson discloses a varying thickness sole plate fastened by screws to the bottom of a solid wood club head. Applicant submits that the Robertson disclosure would not find obvious application to a technologically advanced metal/resin club head such as the one disclosed by Galloway et al. Moreover, the application of the Robertson disclosure to the Galloway et al. club head, as proposed by the Examiner, would violate explicit teachings of Galloway et al. relating to weight distribution of the club head.

As now presented, claim 2 recites the tubular part of the hosel portion as extending upwardly from the sole plate and being connected to the metal component only at the sole plate. Obviously, Galloway et al. cannot meet this claimed feature, since the Galloway et al. club head has a tubular hosel wall 120 that connects at its upper and lower ends to the major body 50.

In view of the foregoing observations, Applicant submits that no reasonable combination of the Galloway et al. and Robertson disclosures can properly serve as a basis for rejecting either of independent claims 1 and 2 under 35 USC § 103(a). Dependent claims 4-7 and 16 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependence from claims 1 and 2.

PRIOR ART REJECTION II

Claims 13-15 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galloway et al. in view of Robertson and JP 09-253242 (Yamaguchi et al.). Applicant traverses this rejection insofar as it might be deemed applicable to any of claims 13-15 as now presented.

In the discussion above, Applicant has shown that independent claims 1 and 2 are patentable over the prior art applied by the Examiner. The patentability of these claims obviously inheres in claims, 13-15, which depend from claim 1 or claim 2.

CLAIMS TO NON-ELECTED EMBODIMENTS

In the discussions above, Applicant has shown that claims 1 and 2 are allowable. The Examiner has recognized claim 3 as being allowable. Claim 1 is generic to the non-elected species illustrated in Figs. 9 and 10 and the species illustrated in Fig. 12. Claims 2 and 3 are generic to all of the species identified by the Examiner in the Requirement for Restriction dated July 20, 2005. In this paper, claims 8 and 9 have been amended so as to depend only from claim 2 or claim 3, and claim 11 has been canceled. In view of the allowability of claims 1, 2 and 3, Applicant submits that claims 8-10 should now be recognized as allowable along with their parent claims under 37 CFR § 1.141(a).

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and observations presented herein, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections stated in the outstanding Office Action and recognize all of the pending claims as allowable.

If unresolved matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Frederick R. Handren, Reg. No. 32,874, at the telephone number provided below, so that these matters can be resolved expeditiously.

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Respectfully submitted,

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